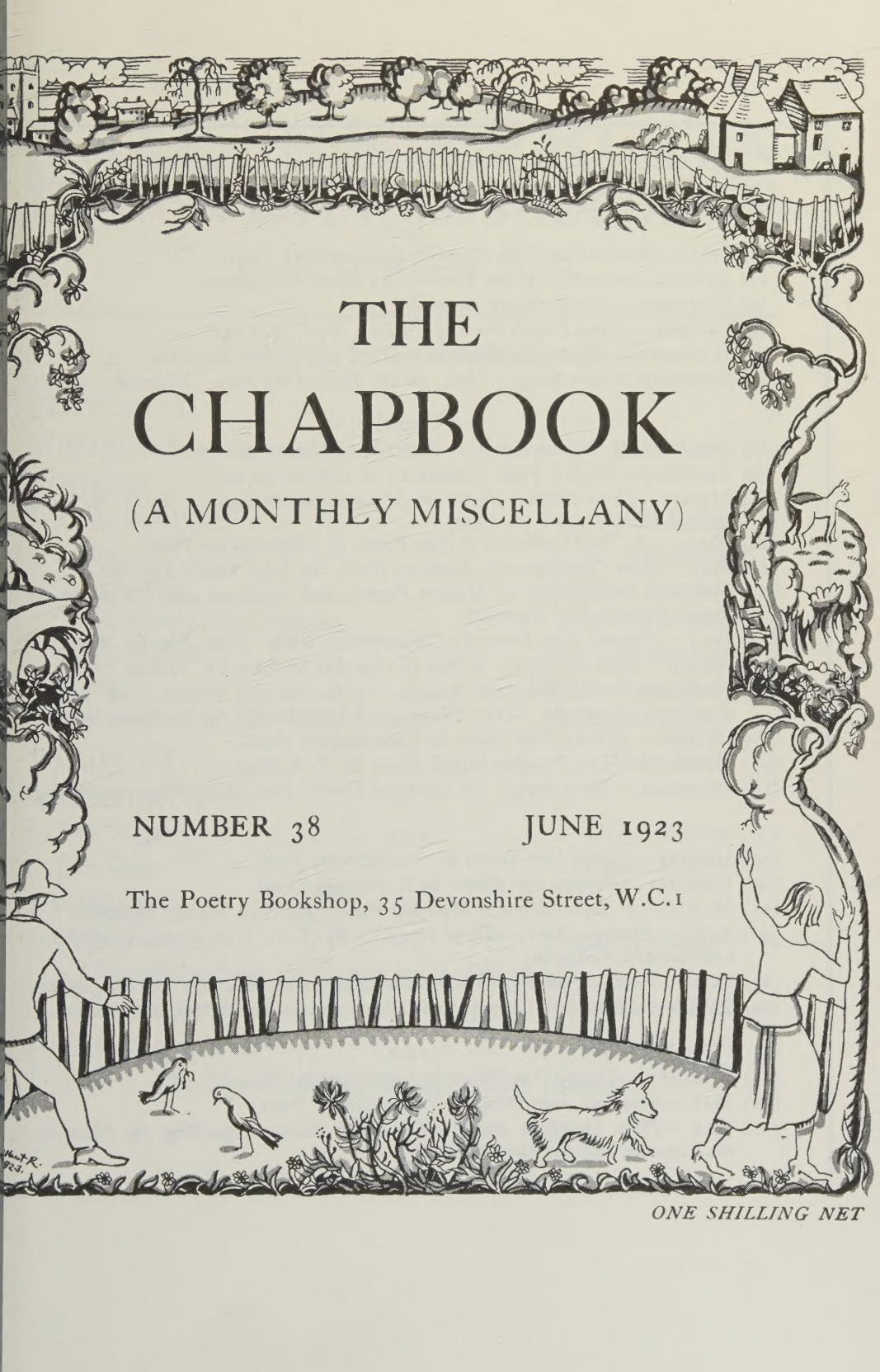




THE CHAPBOOK

(A MONTHLY MISCELLANY)

NUMBER 38

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ONE SHILLING NET

THE CHAPBOOK (A Monthly Miscellany) was born in July, 1919. It is published on the first of each month. The following is a list of the numbers that have already appeared :

1919.

- (1) JULY.—*Twenty-three New Poems by Contemporary Poets.*
- (2) AUGUST.—*Decoration in the Theatre.* By Albert Rutherston.
- (3) SEPTEMBER.—*Poems Newly Decorated.*
- (4) OCTOBER.—*Some French Poets of To-Day.* By F. S. Flint.
- (5) NOVEMBER.—*Rhymes for Children*, with 70 appropriate woodcuts.
- (6) DECEMBER.—*Four Songs : Nod. At the Turn of the Burn. Melnillo. Arabia.*

1920.

- (7) JANUARY.—*A Collection of New Poems by Contemporary Poets.*
- (8) FEBRUARY.—*Modern Prose Literature : A Critical Survey.*
- (9) MARCH.—*Three Critical Essays on Modern English Poetry.* By T. S. Eliot, Aldous Huxley and F. S. Flint.
- (10) APRIL.—*A Third Collection of New Poems by Contemporary Poets.*
- (11) MAY.—*Some Contemporary American Poets.* By John Gould Fletcher.
- (12) JUNE.—*A Bibliography of Modern Poetry, with Notes on some Contemporary Poets.* Compiled by Recorder.
- (13) JULY.—*Thirteen New Poems by Contemporary Poets.* (Also *Pins for Wings.*)
- (14) AUGUST.—*Aria da Capo : A Play in One Act* by Edna St. Vincent Millay.
- (15) SEPTEMBER.—*Old Broadside Ballads.* Collected and Edited, with Reproductions in facsimile, Cover Design, and Introduction by C. Lovat Fraser.
- (16) OCTOBER.—*Sixteen New Poems by Contemporary Poets.*
- (17) NOVEMBER.—*The Younger French Poets.* By F. S. Flint.
- (18) DECEMBER.—*Three Songs : A Christmas Carol. Full Moon. Desire in Spring.*

1921.

- (19) JANUARY.—*Eleven New Poems by Contemporary Poets.*
- (20) FEBRUARY.—*Puppets and Poets.* By E. Gordon Craig.
- (21) MARCH.—*A House (Modern Morality Play).* By Ford Madox Hueffer.
- (22) APRIL.—*Prose in Poetry (Three Essays).* By T. S. Eliot, Frederic Manning and Richard Aldington.
- (23) MAY.—*Nineteen Poems by Contemporary Poets*, also *Pathology des Dommagistes.*
- (24) JUNE.—*A List of 101 Commendable Plays*, ancient and modern, with notes.

1922.

- (25) FEBRUARY.—*Twelve New Poems by Contemporary Poets.*
- (26) MAY.—*Seventeen New Poems by Contemporary Poets.*
- (27) JULY.—*Three Questions and Twenty-Seven Answers regarding the Necessity, the Function, and the Form of Poetry.*

THE CHAPBOOK

(A MONTHLY MISCELLANY)

EDITED BY HAROLD MONRO

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The Cover Designs are by Albert Rutherford

Editorial

THE small public that supports THE CHAPBOOK has amply demonstrated its enthusiasm, but it amounts at present only to a thousand persons, and, apparently, in spite of the opportunities for publicity afforded by the Poetry Bookshop, it cannot be made to rise to the fifteen hundred necessary for existence.

There must be something wrong. Is it with the public, or with the periodical ? Are there not fifteen hundred people in the English-speaking world who think it worth while to spend one shilling a month on THE CHAPBOOK ? The question seems ridiculous, and we would not trouble our readers with considerations of circulation, or any other domestic affair, were it not that we have to confess at last we are now not any more able, much as we love our periodical, to defray its average loss of twenty-five pounds a month. We have reached the bottom of our purse. If somebody would subsidize us at the rate of three hundred pounds a year, or (and this, of course, we should prefer), if five hundred additional people would subsidize us each at the rate of one shilling each month, we could then continue monthly publication without any profit, but with plenty of patience and enthusiasm. Otherwise . . .

If praise were a sufficient help we should be thriving. A critic writes of one of our issues this year : " It is the best number I have ever seen of any periodical." A supporter comments : " After their third issue, most poetry magazines rapidly calcify, but THE CHAPBOOK develops from year to year, gradually, like a living organism." Another : " It is quite the prettiest piece of work of its kind being produced in England to-day." We could boast of many more such comments ; yet during the five months of this year the average circulation has only risen by fifty copies, and the issues the most praised by individuals have been regularly the least supported by the public.

THE CHAPBOOK has the advantage of rent-free offices at the Poetry Bookshop, and it is burdened by no editorial or clerical salaries.

The average monthly deficit is almost precisely equivalent to the average monthly payments to contributors. THE CHAPBOOK then can only gain a further lease of life by ceasing to remunerate its contributors, which is equivalent to being subsidized by them. A periodical can only exist on the charity of contributors when it is edited and written by literary beginners, who cannot otherwise get themselves printed. We always encourage promising beginners, but we have also provided our readers with contributions by many of the most important writers and artists of this time.

What a number of meretricious or wicked things exist upon the earth : fake drugs ; quack critics ; bogus companies ; poisonous patent foods ; Sunday newspapers ; Outlines of Literature and Art ! Millions of people support these, and we only need five hundred. Hundreds of people earn thousands of pounds through them and we are not asking to earn anything, but rather to be allowed to give something away—not for the virtue, but for the pleasure.

To-day's post has brought two new subscriptions ; also four prospectuses of new periodicals. Competition indeed is keen. This will be the last monthly number that we can publish, unless some friend or a number of friends will make it possible for us to continue. But we cannot beg.

Those who have followed our history will know that it is not for lack of enthusiasm or perseverance that again we are obliged to change our methods. For purposes of economy, our present plan is to amalgamate the six remaining monthly numbers of this year into a HALF-YEARLY ISSUE to be PUBLISHED ON THE FIRST OF NOVEMBER, uniform in size and style with the present CHAPBOOK. We shall drop criticism and confine ourselves almost entirely to the representation of Poetry and of Design. This combined issue will be sent to all old and new subscribers at the rate of a six-monthly subscription.



Woodcut

John 1

Love and Pride

RUBBING the steel flesh of a used heart
When the acid bites again
Proves hardening useless.
Formed like a bird,
And fluttering like a great bird,
Wrathfully the spirit
Entered my room,
Filling it with soft wild sound,
Crying with sweet and incomprehensible sweetness.
The restless beating and crying
Attacking like aural anæsthetic
Reft self from body,
Floating it to some rare place,
Ever crying and beating wings,
Crashing and folding up sense :

Till a flute-voice, cloud-floating shadow-voice from brain,
said :

“ A pale frigid child
Places his crystal heart against thine.”
That was the end and cause of vision.

Some walk now past the dwelling
Gazing up at the window
Till I, social, look out and nod.
All this while
The clear eye of a pale child
Watches my dreams,
And the wind blowing in at the window
Sees how I rub, polish, at the steel of my used heart
Where the acid bites again.

(*E. W. Alexander*)

House

IN the soft street the houses stand,
Precipitated from the dark
Liquid of brooding chemicals,
Each a little crystal ark.

In the soft blackness of the sky
A hundred thousand currents swim,
Curling all night about my house,
Standing a worn rock grim.

Oh crystal point, oh air-washed rock,
Your wonder stirs : I doff my hat.
Your star-dropped mystery links with me—
Out crawls the necessary cat.

(*Michael Dugdale*)

Bruges Fair

THE crudely carved creatures fret
Like things alive, to start their course ;
The scarlet spotted beasts curvet,
Made animate by fruitless force.
Then harsh and loud the shrill pipes rattle :
The caracoling steeds advance ;
And glossy cardboard pigs and cattle
In vain unending circles prance.
Cruel and hard the raucous clatter
Dins ceaselessly, and bright cascades
Of fierce discord-colours spatter
The drunken air. The music fades,
Each maddened creature bends its head,
Sinks motionless, becomes once more
The carved thing of white and red,
Glass-eyed and wooden as before.

(*Anna Wickham*) Mare Bred from Pegasus

FOR God's sake, stand off from me :
There's a brood mare here going to kick like Hell
With a mad uprising energy ;
And where the wreck will end who'll tell ?
She'll splinter the stable and eat a groom.
For God's sake, give me room ;
Give my will room.

" Make Beauty for me ! "—that was what you said,
While I was cowering at your dying fire,
Laconic, blowing at your chill desire.
Then flame broke out in me to char you dead ;
A fierce hope and a more fierce distrust
To char your bones to dust.

My pretty jockey, you've the weight
To be a rider, but not my mate ;
And yet your spirit's bold to impregnate,
And I am a lashing, butting hate. . . .

Since my poor life began
I had desire to serve my man
With all my wit, all imagination,
And every subtle beauty of creation ;
And you come late
And mock me in my masterless hard state.

" Make beauty for me ! "—that was what you said.
Desire rose up in me to strike you dead,
With that mad mare my will
To lash and smash her fill. . . .

Run, run, and hide you in some woman's heart ;
In a retreat I cannot kick apart.

Orion

EMBARRASSED by the wild scintillating rays of the moon-
light
Orion, hunter of proud beasts, constricted groinwards with the
celebrated belt,
Wanders bewildered, thwarted. Elaborate plans made by him are
shattered.
Orion prays loudly but in vain for a sheet of some all-embracing
darkness—
Gods both Olympian and Tartarean stare at him, impotent though
willing.

On a Certain Poem

THE king returned from the sea, the paid court poets burst
Into strange rhapsodies of wild occasional verse,
Piling extravagance upon unlimited extravagance: "O king," they
chanted,
"Thou art"—and here followed many lines of praise, quite un-
founded.
But being a people quite unusual in their attitude, their strains
Had a queer far-away beauty, holding their world in chains.

The Old Book

I OPENED the dingy volume; the print, three centuries old,
Was a trouble to the eyes; in the half-seen misty blur of the
letters
Were voices crying of evils, though it seemed to no purpose.
Some priest of the seventeenth century, perhaps, grown sick of his
country,
Upbraiding the faults of the people, the riotous ways of the court,
All the time writhing at the futility of it, perhaps feeling his own ?

Poem

“THIS is the end”: the anguished word
Scarce stirred the air. She bowed her head.
No sign I made that heart had heard;
I, too, was weary and sped.

Above us loomed the night-black tree;
Beneath, a valley in shadow lay;
A waning moon beyond the sea
Cast a faint sickly ray.

Once, “Oh, have courage!” had been my cry;
Now mutely aghast I gazed into
A face distorted, caught the sigh
That shook her through and through.

No, no. Why further should we roam,
Since every road man journeys by
Ends on a hillside far from home
Under an alien sky;

Where souls disconsolate and sick
That Valley scan each treads alone,
And a Sea whose menace leaves the quick
Colder than churchyard stone.

(Malcolm
Cowley)

Processional of the Third Season

THE year proceeds now formally to his end
(cover him over, sprinkle the dead leaves over)
come, my neighbours, let us gather the body
and hollow out a place and bury him
(plows and shovels and harrows and sixty horses).

We men of Strongstown together will lift an arm
of this his body, Belsano takes another
and Cherry Tree and Garman's Mills each carry
a limp huge leg along the Stony Pike
(cover him over, sprinkle the dead leaves over).

Plows and shovels and harrows and sixty horses
precede his body and after him are driven
a dozen brace of turkeys, a flock of geese
a fat steer and a cart with sausages
hams, bacons, pumpkins, apple butter, cakes
the yellowest cornmeal, the first and whitest flour
barrels of cider :—if it is a wake
that we are holding, let the wake be merry
(sprinkle the dead leaves over).

Hollow a place for his head by the Dunkard graveyard
(plows and harrows and shovels and sixty horses)
lay his feet by the Meeting House at Bethel
arrange his bones twelve inches under the sod
from one field to another across the township.

My neighbours, let us kill and roast the steer
and spit the turkeys and broach the cider. Let us
eat hugely, drink (over his grave will sprout)
the first wheat to his memory in the spring).

Cover him over. Sprinkle the dead leaves over.



cut

John Nash

(Translated from the Chinese
by Arthur Waley)

The Nightmare

(By Wang Yen-shou, son of Wang I, 2nd century A.D.)

One night, about the time I came of age, I dreamt that demon creatures fought with me while I slept. . . . When I woke I told this vision in verse, that the dreamers of posterity might use my poem as a spell to drive off evil dreams. And so often has it proved its worth, that I dare not any longer hide it from the world. The words are these:

ONCE, as in the darkness I lay asleep by night
Strange things suddenly saw I in my dream ;
All my dream was of monsters that came about me while I slept,
Devils and demons, four-horned, serpent-necked,
Fishes with bird-tails, three-legged bogies
From six eyes staring ; dragons hideous,
Yet three-part human,—
On rushed the foul flocks, grisly legions
Stood round me, stretched out their arms,
And danced their hands about me, and sought to snatch me from
my bed.
Then cried I (and in my dream
My voice was thick with anger and my words all awry)
“ Ill-spawned elves, how dare you
Beset with your dire shapes Creation’s cleanest
Shapeliest creature, Man ? ” Then straightway I struck out,
Flashed my fists like lightning among them, thumped like thunder,
Here slit Jack o’ Lantern,
Here smashed fierce Hog-Face,
Battered wights and goblins,
Smote venturous vampires, pounded in the dust
Imps, gnomes and lobs,
Kobolds and kelpies.
Swiped bulge-eyed bogies, oafs and elves ;
Clove Tough-head’s triple skull, threw down
Clutching Night-hag, flogged the gawky Ear-Wig Fiend
That floundered toward me on its tail.

I struck at staring eyes,
Stamped on upturned faces ; through close ranks
Of hoofs I cut my way, buried my fingers deep
In half-formed flesh ;
Ghouls tore at my touch ; I slit sharp noses,
Trode on red tongues, seized shaggy manes,
Shook bald-heads by the beard.
Then there was a scuffling. Arms and legs together
Chasing, crashing and sliding ; a helter-skelter
Of feet lost and found in the tugging and toppling,
Cuffing, cudgelling, frenzied flogging. . . .
So fought I, till terror and dismay
Shook those foul flocks ; panic spread like a flame
Down mutinous ranks ; they stand, they falter,
Those ghastly legions ; but fleeing, suddenly turn
Glazed eyes upon me, to see how now I fare.
At last, to end their treachery
Again I rushed upon them, braved their slaver and snares,
Stood on a high place and lashed down among them,
Shrieking and cursing as my blows crashed.
Then three by three and four by four,
One after another hop-a-trot they fled,
Bellowing and bawling till the air was full of their breath,—
Grumbling and snarling,
Those vanquished ogres, demons discomfited,
Some that would fain have run
Lolling and lurching, some that for cramped limbs
Could not stir from where they stood.
Some over belly-wounds
Bent double ; some in agony gasping and groaning.
Suddenly the clouds broke and (I knew not why)
A thin light filtered the darkness ; then while again
I sighed in wonder that those disastrous creatures,
Dire monstrosities, should dare assail
A clean and comely man . . . there sounded in my ears
A twittering and crowing. And outdoors it was light.
The noisy cock, mindful that dawn was in the sky,

Had crowed his warning, and the startled ghosts,
Because they heard dawn heralded, had fled
In terror and tribulation from the rising day.

(In an epilogue the poet seeks consolation in the fact that many evil dreams and occurrences have in the past been omens of good. Duke Huan of Ch'i, while hunting in the marshes, saw in a vision an ogre "as broad as a cart-wheel and as long as a shaft, wearing a purple coat and red cap." It was an omen that he would rise to the Pentarchy. Wên, Duke of Chin, dreamt that the Marquis of Ch'u held him prostrate and sucked out his brains; yet his kingdom defeated Ch'u. Lao Tzu made use of demons, and thereby became leader among the Spirits of Heaven.
"So evil turns to good.")

Hot Cakes

(By Shu Hsi, 3rd century A.D.)

WINTER has come ; fierce is the cold ;
In the sharp morning air new-risen we meet.
Rheum freezes in the nose ;
Frost hangs about the chin.
For hollow bellies, for chattering teeth and shivering knees
What better than hot cake ?
Soft as the down of Spring,
Whiter than Autumn wool !
Dense and swift the steam
Rises, swells and spreads.
Fragrance flies through the air,
Is scattered far and wide,
Steals down along the wind and wets
The covetous mouth of passer-by.
Servants and grooms
Throw sidelong glances, munch the empty air.
They lick their lips who serve ;
While lines of envious lackeys by the wall
Stand dryly swallowing.

(*František Langer*)

Timely Death

(*Translated from the Czech by P. Selver.*)

ON the outskirts of Žižkov there stood a house which was known as "The Hive." The house had been built for poor families, and besides them it contained all sorts of sub-tenants: life's outcasts, itinerant musicians, house-to-house pedlars, women who hawked wares from one tavern to another, artisans out of work. The house had neither morality nor sin. But it had a dizzily rapid vital tempo.

Girls grew into women there overnight, and boys became men with equal speed. Marriages aged swiftly, months were as years, and passions asurge at nightfall had ebbed away by the morning. And what by morning was cold and valueless, was at nightfall a thing to be fervently adored.

Brawls began, graduated by blows, indifference was avenged by contacts which drew blood, the shedding of blood was forgiven with kisses, kisses were requited by stormy embraces. Wild scenes of jealousy were enacted, when a man's footsteps aroused the terror of a crouching woman, scornful glances flung her imploringly upon her knees; and hard, masculine hands, already strangling the woman's throat on the dishevelled bed, evoked on her face a smile full of malice, testifying that she was aware of his mastery and his adoration. In one day people loved each other and were loved, they loved and were hated, they hated and were loved.

Such were the ups and downs of the house.

On the third floor lived Mr. Hajs, who at night used to play the guitar in taverns, and at home played it the whole day, because he suffered from sleeplessness, so that a quiet strumming could be heard in the house, whenever it was not deadened by quarrels and shouting. Below on the second story lived a family with Matyas, a workman from Rustonka, a good-looking fellow, but sluggish and taciturn, and then a mother with Kristina, a beautiful and charming girl.

When Kristina had grown into a young woman, she disappeared

from the house one day, although she knew full well that Matyas had her in mind. In the house they were used to such happenings, only Matyas felt sad about it.

Time went on, and then one day a carriage stopped in front of the house. From it Kristina stepped forth in silk and furs, and with a rustling of skirts she went up the stairs to her mother. She welcomed her, dusted a chair and made her sit down. Then she called the woman from next door, with whom Matyas also arrived, and the inquisitive and gadabout house-porter's wife came as well. Mr. Hajs from the third floor somehow got to hear about the visitor, and he brought his guitar with him. Then Kristina told them how on the very first day that she had left the house, an old gentleman had made her acquaintance and had taken her home with him. How he had installed her in a villa, and had given her everything she could think of, a maid, a housekeeper, a coachman, and a chef. How the chef did her cooking for her—oh, what cooking! And now she intoned a song celebrating the beauty of food, the bliss of eating one's fill; of pastry light as air, fragrant meat, snails and mussels baked to a golden tint, rose-coloured fish bathed in gravies, rolls as golden as ducats, and what cakes there were! The old gentleman brought bananas and pineapples, and when she searched his pockets she was sure to find a box of chocolates too. She spoke with gusto and zest about the warmth arising from the plates, the scent proceeding from the slices of fruit, of the simple charm to be seen in the light-yellow wicker basket of cakes. Of the caressing warmth of ovens and grills, the snugness of a bright kitchen, of the fairyland treasures of a pantry always replete. She told them about the displays of the dealers in delicacies, how enticing and inexhaustible they are, of the fruit stores, where the various fruits have such a smiling appearance, and have such an allurements in their smiles, that you must buy them and plunge your teeth into them, of the confectioners' shops which contain all the dainties in the world. And it all sounded like the account of a dream from an afternoon nap, full of satisfied appetite, relish and delicious savour. That, she said, was how she lived.

When she went away, she gave Matyas a two-crown note to buy a souvenir of her, and not to think ill of her. She would come again, she said.

Matyas said to himself : " I'll buy a revolver. I love her and I'll kill her. She's too happy. I can't bear it."

After some time she drove up again in a beautiful carriage, and went in to her mother. She wore a pale violet dress with a broad hat also pale violet in colour, and from it a white plume fluttered. She came and sat among them all. Mr. Hajs was there with his guitar, Matyas also, with a revolver in his pocket. She drank bottled beer with them, and did not take her gloves off. She just sat at the head of the table, almost invisible beneath the broad edge of her hat, and talked. She told them that the old gentleman had died suddenly, unexpectedly, his heirs had moved her away. But one of them, a bank manager, a bald man with whiskers, had taken her to live with him. And now everything was different. There came the affluent plenty of a small villa, resembling a larder in which a child nibbles dainties. There arose a period of magnificence and pride. She was no longer a little pet animal kept for fattening, and causing pleasure to her owner when she ate well. Now she was a sort of little jewel, which has to be seen, admired and envied by all. The gentleman drove with her to the theatres and sat with her in private boxes, so situated that the people could easily look into them from all sides. He sat with her at the centre tables of big restaurants, and cut up her food. In the afternoon he drove with her in an open carriage through the Stromovka, and took a delight in greeting all his acquaintances. In the evening he invited his friends, among whom were rich men, artists, and army officers, and all of them paid court to her, used fair words to her, and envied him. Oh, she could feel among them the atmosphere of her beauty, in which she let them warm themselves and languish. She knew her smiles which aroused joy on their faces, her insuperable side-long glances, the movements of her limbs, which drew the gaze of all towards them, the motion of her body, which distended all nostrils and clenched all lips in the room. She spoke and was captivated by her own beauty ; enraptured she half closed and opened her eyes of a languid grey, in pride she linked her hands above her head, enticing and provocative, she swayed to and fro slightly. On that day Matyas was totally unable to shoot her ; she was like an innocently fawning kitten.

When she came the next time, she was dressed in the grey attire of an elegant lady, extremely dignified in her bearing and apparel. She sat down among her people and told them that she was no longer living with the banker, but that she had left him for a band-master. Oh, the life she led now ! She would never have thought it possible to live like that. What had her life been before, first abounding in milk and honey, then all noise and show ? Now she had no villa of her own, she had only one maid, and no coachman at all. But she lived enwrapped in her friend's kisses, her hands were covered with them from morning to evening, and they never even dried upon her lips. She ranged amid a warm haze of love, she waded in smiles, she bathed in contacts. At night her pillow had a warm smoothness, as if her lover's hands embraced her from all sides, the fragrant cambric of her linen caressed her like his unfailing lips. How beautiful it all was, how beautiful. Mr. Hajs accompanied her words with a slow serenade. She told them how her lover spoke to her, what words he sought, what kisses, how before going to bed he sat down at the piano, and with her head on his shoulders, and pressing his lips into her hair, he played her lullabies which his fingers devised, and which made her eyelids droop, until, rocked by the music and the kisses into a half-sleep, she was carried into the white pillows. Then all who were listening to Kristina's words let their arms sink into their laps and closed their eyes. Mr. Hajs let his guitar slip from his clasp, and Matyas released the hand which was toying with the revolver in his pocket.

The next time she came in high-heeled boots which made her small foot quite tiny, and holding an embroidered handbag, she sat down among her friends to tell them that she had left the band-master, who had become jealous and wanted to insist upon marriage. Now she had a lover, a married man, who paid for her cosy furnished room. But she was rarely at home, she avoided him, so as to be able to spend her nights in dancing. She danced in ballrooms under white, glittering lustres, where coloured lamps, red and green, shone from the palms, in the corners of the hall, from the curtains of the windows. She danced at fancy-dress balls, carnivals and evening revels with sentimental pierrots and dominoes who flirted with water-nymphs ; she danced and wearied her partners, changing

a powdered clown for a florid Falstaff, whom she then replaced by a brown oriental with a false red beard. She danced with her head thrown back, her body bent sideways. The world twisted around, the whole earth twisted beneath her feet. She expressed the rhythm of the cello by the movements of her legs, the melancholy of the violin by the heaving of her shoulders, the trills of the clarinets by the flashing of her eyes and the glitter of her teeth, by her smiles. She danced till dawn, till she was breathlessly weary ; she was mad with the dance, and all who looked at her were mad too. Even the memory of it made her close her eyes, enlarged from being slightly painted, and she smacked her lips for joy. Mr. Hajs played a tarantella on the guitar, Kristina tapped on the floor with her toe and heel by turns, while Matyas, not feeling enough courage, crouched in a corner.

When next she returned to the house, she had tired eyes and a jaded face beneath its coating of rouge and powder. She now recounted other curious things. She was the mistress of a gambler. She travelled with him through the world in throbbing expresses, dozing with weariness on leather sofas, she ranged between north and south, racecourses and hunting fields, watering places, mountain hotels. She sat with the man as he played roulette, and helped him to rake in the piles of louis d'or. At other times she drank whisky with smart stockbrokers, to find out the quotations on change for the next day ; now and then she sat on the gamblers' laps as they played poker or faro, and with her fingers she pointed out to her lover behind their backs the numbers of their cards. All the while she heard the gold coins ringing round her with the laughter of innocent maidens, on the green tables they glittered, fair to see and delightful to hear, magnificent as the loftiest symbols of enjoyment and ecstasy ; and the bank-notes rustled like wanton silk underwear ; though submissive to the touch, yet emblematic of the inevitable ; though buoyant as vapour, yet heavy as fate. And she greedily clenched her fingers, as if the heaps of yellow gold lay before her. Her hearers looked at the table to see how the coins were raked over, even Matyas, who on that day was deaf and blind. Mr. Hajs, with his inseparable guitar, imitated on two strings the chinking of gold pieces.

After a time Kristina glided up the stairs of the house, bringing her mother two bottles of wine wrapped in green paper. Her dress was bright and gaudy, and swinging to and fro on a chair she hummed snatches of a ditty to herself. Now she had no regular lover, she said. But is there anyone who would not love her ? She was loved by all, around whom she walked from table to table—for she was in a wine-shop, where could be heard the clink of glasses when healths were being drunk, the buzz of conversation amid the rattle of glasses, the sound of music above the murmur of voices, where the whole night, on the verge of tipsiness, people sang and drank for joy, indifference and sorrow, where they remembered, if things were merry, and if they were sad then they would forget. Wine ! It slips coldly into the throat and pours hotly through the veins. It has a brilliant colour, a delicious fragrance, a rich taste. It has its own god, and brings people closer to him. And champagne, a blending of air, juice and fire ! When the glass stood before her, oh, how the wine blustered with unexpected seethings, so that she drank it up straightway ; and when it had vanished in her mouth, a hot fragrance was wafted in place of it. It banished the thoughts and conjured up the passions. And when she washed her hands in it, they were scented with it day and night. She sniffed at her hands and all the others sniffed at them too, because they smelt of wine and dazed the senses, so that Maytas did not summon up courage to take aim, because he was as if drunk with the delicate palms of her hands. Even Mr. Hajs accompanied Kristina, who had continued to hum her ditty, so merrily and unrestrainedly on the guitar, as if he had drunk wine.

After that Kristina stayed away for a long, long time, as if she had forgotten the house. And when nobody was really expecting her she suddenly arrived. But she was very poorly dressed, and with only a handkerchief over her head, like a servant girl. She sat down quietly by the window, while her friends assembled. But she told them nothing, she sat silently with her hands resting in her lap. Her boots were down at heel, and they told of nightly tramping along the edges of pavements. The whiff of the hospital wafted from her clothing showed that she had been ill for a long time. And then her face and hands, oh, how wretched, how pale and haggard ;

she had scarcely any bosom, her throat was shrunken. Everything about her said : There are the years of beauty, the revelling delight in all that was luscious, comely, amorous, alert, reckless, intoxicating.

And her mother did not dust a chair for her, but only watched her gloomily from a corner.

When Matyas had taken all this in, and Kristina did not utter a sound, he went up to her with the revolver in his hand and shot her through the head.

(Humbert Wolfe)

La Bonne Fortune

PROSE was, it seemed, not his medium. The words sulked in their long prim rows. Had he misconceived himself? Should he, after all, have been a schoolmaster? To arrange immature mental processes, like bulbs in winter : wasn't that a higher form of art? And the amusement when you expected a dog-daisy and up popped an orchid—well, not an orchid, but that field orchid like a bee. It almost—do you know—buzzed. Well then why not chuck the attic (and that horrible washstand with the hole in it for the tin basin) and advertise? He saw the advertisement : rather distinguished, *n'est ce pas?* (damned affectation! O well): "Prosaist desires post as English Master in Seminary; rose-red brick with ivy preferred. Would, if required, deal with pre-Georgian period. Write Box——" Why box? Shouldn't it be window-box, if he were to have his tiny borders, his herbaceous But would "Prosaist" really give his quality, seeing that prose was not altogether his medium? And in any case it would be measured by the inch and charged accordingly. He felt in his pocket—three shillings, seven pennies, and a rouble. At least he thought it was a rouble. Or Russia now?

He would speak his perfect French with a slight accent to put these people at their ease. "Nous autres anglais," he was saying in the little café by the yellow Neva, "nous avons la bonne fortune. Quant à vous," he would add with a high giggle, "elle vous a-tout court." That would no doubt baffle them. They would turn it over in their subtle, but infinitely tedious wits. How did he mean this English? Good fortune had Russia—but how? In her grip, for, example—and squeezed their blood out, so that it dripped and froze dripping? Or was it death he hinted at—the one with the pale twisted smile—death was the true Good Fortune, and had all Russia or nearly. Or perhaps an anti-Communist formula? Better give him the go-by. At any moment one of the brutes might come in. But he wouldn't care, that one. Oh no. He would go with them, repeating no doubt "elle vous a." Pity he wasn't more intelligible. Perhaps he didn't really know French. "Damn them," he reflected, sitting alone in the tiny café, "not know French!" and then smiling subtly: "The cowards."

Someone came in slightly dragging a foot like a misplaced adverb. Harman of course—well then he would try him—why not?—with English. At least there wouldn't be an accusation of not really knowing the language. Or would there? Those Jews had a way of making all Englishmen seem foreigners. In Russia no doubt they had the same effect on Russians—Pogroms, no doubt.

"What do you think," he said to Harman, "of pogroms?" Harman looked at him. "I got ten bob off the sub-editor in advance on my Ascot stuff. Come and have some food—at once." Food—what was the fellow at?—*food*!—didn't he know that he had positively given it up? A little indecent in him to mention it.

It even (incredibly) moved his profound calm to a flicker of anger. But he wouldn't show that—trust him! "Not personal," he muttered. "It might be Armenians." "Of course it might," said Harman cordially: "in fact it is, as a general rule. We don't have the habit. But if you're interested in massacres I could tell you over dinner something a great-uncle once experienced. Queer—in your line." Dinner again! He would have to correct this fellow. Curious how blunt—no not quite that—how unsensitised these Jews became. If he said now "Man does not live by bread alone," that would be

a counter. But it was New Testament, wasn't it? Wouldn't do to be rude. And at any rate he could listen to the pogrom while disdain-ing food.

The crowd were streaming down the street yelling, so that he had no difficulty in understanding Harman's great-uncle's panic. Nasty fellows some of them. Particularly that one with the different-coloured eyeballs—one blue, one brown; and the desperate slow way he opened and closed his mouth. These blue shirts they all wore too, and the heavy shoes on the cobbles—no wonder the old Jew popped down the trap and shouted as he went. What did he shout? "Filet mignon pour deux."

Now what the devil could that mean? Something esoteric. But Harman wasn't to suppose that he didn't understand—not likely. "Filletted mignonette," he said. "Like our planta genista—Romanoff dynasty." "But why Russia?" queried the incorrigible dullard. Where else was it happening, damn him! "Ask your great-uncle," he said with a sly smile. On the raw that time, but what wouldst thou with a such fellow? "I do my thinking," he observed slowly, "in French." "Waiter," Harman called sharply, "a little brandy here, quick!" "Brandy," he muttered to himself. "What next?"

He spoke aloud with laboured politeness to the crowd in the café by the yellow Neva.

"Nous autres anglais," he was saying, "nous avons la bonne fortune."

The brandy, however, came too late.



Day of Atonement

KRAMER

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